

**DIAMOND SHAMROCK, SDS BIOTECH AGREE TO PAY
OVER \$1 MILLION FOR TSCA PCB VIOLATIONS**

Diamond Shamrock Corp. and SDS Biotech Corp. agreed July 1 to pay more than \$1 million in fines and related costs for the mishandling of polychlorinated biphenyls at SDS's Green's Bayou plant in Houston, Texas. The agreement between the two firms and the Environmental Protection Agency is the second largest for PCB violations under the Toxic Substances Control Act, an agency spokesman said.

Under the agreement, Diamond Shamrock and SDS Biotech, a Diamond Shamrock joint venture, will pay EPA \$800,000 in penalties for PCB-related violations. The two firms also have agreed to spend over \$300,000 to improve PCB storage and handling operations at the Houston plant. Improvements will include the construction of a 5,000-square-foot PCB storage facility and the hiring of a consultant to write instructions on proper PCB handling at the plant.

The penalty amount is based on several factors, including the firms' cooperation in negotiations, says Region VI Administrator Dick Whittington. "Because the companies negotiated with us earnestly, we were able to reach a completely satisfactory settlement, which is essentially the same as what we would have gotten by going to court. By negotiating, we avoided that time-consuming, expensive process." Last September, EPA proposed a fine of over \$2 million for illegal PCB activities at the Houston plant (TMN, Sept. 12, 1984, p. 286).

TOXIC MATERIALS NEWS IN BRIEF

• Monsanto Co. and the Environmental Protection Agency have entered into a consent agreement/order that requires Monsanto to clean up and contain dioxin contamination at its plant in Nitro, W.Va. Under the agreement/order, Monsanto will excavate and cap various inactive areas of the plant that have been contaminated by dioxin (2,3,7,8-TCDD). To prevent worker exposure to soil potentially contaminated by dioxin, Monsanto has agreed to restore, grade and pave these areas with asphalt. Contact EPA's Walter Lee at (215) 597-9825.

• National Education Association announced July 3 that it will conduct a comprehensive survey to determine the extent of asbestos in schools. NEA Vice President Keith Geiger said the survey is prompted by "the lack of aggressive action" by the Environmental Protection Agency, Congress, the Reagan administration and most state governments. Criticizing the lack of uniform standards and adequate funding for abatement, Geiger asked EPA to set a "new get-tough policy" on asbestos. A handbook on asbestos -- "Taming the Silent Killer" -- is available from NEA, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 822-7300.

• Chemical Abstracts Service is offering two search aids to help users of the chemical abstracts file in CAS ONLINE. The first, a new edition of the CA Headings Lists, contains CA subject index headings and cross references for the 9th, 10th and 11th index periods (1972-1986). The second aid, called qualified substances in the CA file, is designed for advanced searchers who want to link CAS registry numbers for any of about 600 frequently indexed substances to controlled-vocabulary qualifiers. Contact Customer Services, CAS, P.O. Box 3012, Columbus, Ohio 43210, (614) 421-3600.

• National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, is soliciting proposals for studies on chemical disposition in mammals. NIEHS is seeking detailed chemical disposition data from about five studies per year of selected environmental contaminants. Most of the studies will require laboratory rats and address the disposition of organic chemicals. Copies of RFP No. NIH-ES-85-11 will be available July 26 from Elizabeth Ford, Contract Specialist, Contracts Management Office, OAM, NIEHS, P.O. Box 12674, Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27709.